

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Before this Amendment, claims 1-17 were present for examination. Claims 1, 8, and 12 are amended. Claims 2, 11, and 13 are cancelled. New claims 18-23 are added. Therefore, claims 1, 3-10, 12, and 14-23 are present for examination, and claims 1, 8, and 12 are the independent claims. No new matter is added by these amendments. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application as amended.

35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph Rejection.

The Office Action has rejected claims 1-11 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to recite "transmitting said electronic document to a customs *information system* via a network" (emphasis provided), which is believed to resolve the rejection. Furthermore, claim 8 has been amended to recite "means for, *in response to verifying the consistency of the electronic document*, transmitting said electronic document data to a customs information system via a network" (emphasis provided), which is believed to resolve the rejection. While the minor amendments do correct the claims pursuant to 35 U.S.C. § 112, it is not believed that the amendments narrow or otherwise alter the inventive scope of the claims. Accordingly, Applicants believe that claims 1-11 are now in condition for allowance.

35 U.S.C. §102 Rejection, Tang

The Office Action has rejected claims 1-2, 4-13, and 14-17 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by the cited portions of Tang et al., U.S. Patent Publ. 2003/0036982 ("Tang").

Embodiments of the claimed invention relate to a consistency verification process between data which includes information required for customs procedures by referring to a

consistency collation rules table. Specifically, claim 1 and similarly claims 8 and 12, as amended, recite "*verifying consistency between data included in the manifest, the B/L, the I/V, and the P/L by referring to a consistency collation rules table*, wherein the consistency collation rules table is to cross-reference data to be verified with manifest data, B/L data, I/V data, and P/L data." (emphasis provided). The information required for the customs procedures includes a manifest, a bill of lading, an invoice, and a packing list. Embodiments of the present invention conduct not only logistics management with the information, but also cash flow management. The bill of lading is a document related to a cash flow on cargoes to be exported. Such documents are initially prepared by copying the data from a variety of sources. Each instance data is copied from a source, inconsistencies due to human error occur. Therefore, it is necessary for logistics management to verify the data consistency of the documents. (see claim 1).

Accordingly, claim 1 effectively conducts a consistency check by using a consistency collation rules table to cross-reference information among the source documents. In contrast, Tang discloses that "[t]he system 1 automatically checks stored data relating to the import cargo" and that "[t]he system 1 automatically checks stored data relating to the export cargo." (Tang at page 3, paragraph 0028). Tang further describes its process for checking import/export cargo as "(a) obtaining a shipment list; (b) *showing content of cargo on a display board* based on the shipment list; (c) checking the export cargo; (d) applying to customs with a customs export declaration; and (e) producing an inspection record." (*Id.*, at page 2, paragraph 0015; emphasis provided). As can be seen by the above recitations, Tang fails to teach or suggest multiple documents (*i.e.*, a bill of lading, a manifest, an invoice, and a packing list, as in claim 1) and by implication fails to teach or suggest verifying consistency among the multiple documents. In other words, Tang displays/checks the content of the cargo, and fails to even consider the other documents recited in claim 1, and even though Tang checks the content of the cargo, the content represents only a single document; hence no consistency verification of multiple documents is performed.

In addition, the display board in Tang is to be viewed by a human which leads to human errors. Assuming, merely for the sake of argument, that Tang does disclose consistency

verification, such verification would lead to the same problems (*i.e.*, human error) which the present invention corrects.

Furthermore, as noted above, Tang is only interested in logistical aspects of cargos (*i.e.*, the tracking of the import and exports), and Tang is not interested in the cash flow management aspect of cargo. This is this case because nowhere does Tang refer to a bill of lading or any other such cash flow documentation. In contrast, claim 1 refers to a bill of lading and enables a party to perform cash flow management while collecting data about various related documents. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that for at least these reasons, claim 1 and similarly claims 8 and 12 are patentable over Tang. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 8, and 12 be withdrawn.

Claims 2-7, 9, 10, 14-23 depend from one of claims 1, 8, or 12, thus by virtue of their dependence on an allowable base claim, Applicants submit that claims 2-7, 9, 10, 14-23 are also patentable over Tang. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 2-7, 9, 10, 14-23 withdrawn.

35 U.S.C. §103(a) Rejection, Tang

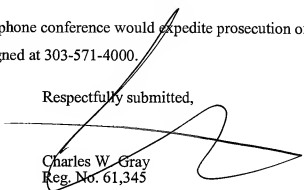
The Office Action has rejected claims 3 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over the cited portions of Tang. Claims 3 and 14 depend from claims 1 and 12, respectively. Thus, for at least the reasons stated above with respect to claims 1 and 12, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 3 and 14 are also patentable over Tang. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 3 and 14 be withdrawn.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants believe all claims now pending in this Application are in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance at an early date is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes a telephone conference would expedite prosecution of this application, please telephone the undersigned at 303-571-4000.

Respectfully submitted,



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